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ABSTRACT

Audiovisual technology can change the teacher-learning situation if various types of visual aids are employed in teaching English in the secondary grades. The use of overhead transparencies is an excellent way to prepare and present the student's ideas. Student's assignments can be produced on transparencies and projected for evaluation by the teacher and the other students. Filmstrips are an ideal medium for independent study as well as small group instruction since both commercially-produced and student-produced filmstrips can create innovative ideas. Learning English through filmmaking can aid in studying subjects like literature and drama. A filmmaking project by an entire class can create a "live" atmosphere in the classroom where students can be engaged in a highly motivating activity while learning. The use of these three visual media would upgrade the teaching of English and give students with learning experiences in active participation in all phases of learning activities. (Author/DS)

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TEACHING ENGLISH WITH AUDIO VISUAL TECHNOLOGY

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Teaching English is always a difficult task. Students find it also a very complex subject to learn. Why is this so? Not because it is a hard and dry subject, but the methodology of teaching and its excessive formalism make it difficult. Traditionally, teaching English involves mainly reading and writing, and the medium of instruction is solely dependent upon "print materials." This method of learning through printed materials only makes it harder for the students, and gradually the loss of interest and motivation takes place. Moreover, writing is far more difficult than reading and here the students face the greatest problems to learn and develop competency. However, the current developments in audio visual technology can dramatically change the teaching-learning situation if various types of "visual aids" are employed in teaching English along with "print materials."

In this paper, I will discuss some techniques of using audio visual methods, particularly visual techniques, in teaching English in secondary grades. Among various educational media, overhead transparencies, filmstrips (sound or without sound), and motion picture (film) have the greatest potential to create a stimulating learning atmosphere by involving students actively in the instructional process

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while they learn. The techniques of each visual medium and how the students can participate in creating varieties of visual aids will be discussed to facilitate reading, writing, and studies of literature and drama, etc.

Teaching with Transparencies:

The overhead projector and overhead transparencies are a meaningful device in the preparation and presentation of students' ideas, both verbal and visual. The school media center can maintain a collection of commercially prepared transparencies for teacher's use as well as can provide production facilities to prepare transparencies according to teacher's specification for almost any type of visuals as needed to accompany reading materials to be taught. Similarly, students can be assigned to prepare simple transparencies to present their ideas, both verbal and visual, on a given topic such as a poem, drama, or composition lesson. For example, in English composition lessons, student themes or writing assignments can be produced on transparencies by means of simple heat or photocopy process, and then projected for joint evaluation by the teacher and students to analyze the writing in relation to the objectives of composition lessons. Again, in writing exercises, students can be assigned to develop ideas on a given topic, and these can be presented to the class by projecting overhead transparencies. This technique will allow each student to compare his writing styles with other students as well as will enable each student to see various composition styles at one time with less effort. At this time, the teacher can make an objective evaluation as regards the best writing.

Other examples of using overhead transparencies are: 1) simple opaque objects or a series of pictures related to a theme or story can be projected and enlarged on the screen to stimulate discussion, and students can write the theme or story while they are viewing the pictures. This technique will help to bridge the gap between conception or idea and actual writing exercises. 2) Students can write a story and make presentations before the class using silhouettes or cutout images by projecting them as they narrate the story. 3) In a lesson plan involving vocabulary building, the teacher can use picture-transfer lift transparencies made from magazine pictures and students can then be asked to identify the projected pictures in as many written words as they can. Later the pictures can be removed leaving only the written words for discussion. 4) In teaching poetry the teacher can present the substance of the poem through simple visual on transparencies, and the students can be assigned to write the theme or gist of the poem. The development of writing skills with visual aids instead of bare imagination is highly motivating and worthy of teaching technique.

Learning from Filmstrips:

Filmstrips are an excellent medium for independent study as well as small-group instruction. A few techniques are presented here whereby both teacher and students can use commercially prepared filmstrips for innovative classroom activities as well as students can make simple filmstrips. Filmstrips can be used in a variety of teaching situations: 1) For writing exercises, the teacher can project a filmstrip and ask the student to write the caption for each frame of the filmstrip, or to write

several questions about the subject or information the filmstrip provides, or to write a simple study guide matching the filmstrip. 2) The teacher can present a filmstrip (without sound) in the class and assign written work to prepare a narrative to accompany the filmstrip. The students can record their own narrative in a cassette tape-recorder to be used with the filmstrip. 3) For developing writing and speaking ability, the teacher, during the filmstrip showing, asks students to jot down notes about what they see and hear. After showing, have students ask each other questions and to write major points or themes treated in the filmstrip.

Another highly motivating and innovative use of filmstrips is to involve students directly in making hand-made filmstrips to summarize a story, or to dramatize stories or themes of a poem, or portray an act from a literary piece. A simple plastic product of 35mm width with sprocket holes conforming to those in regular commercial single-frame filmstrips is now available on the market, which permits one to draw visuals directly on it. A special holder allows proper placement of each frame. Students can prepare such filmstrips at a very low cost enacting a drama or one-act play or story where they will learn to develop their own ideas in writing.

Learning English Through Film-Making:

Motion-picture films (generally 16mm) are greatly used in the classroom in studying literature and drama. However, simple super-8 movies can be made at a very low cost because of the technological developments in the film industry. Super-8 motion picture is a highly sophisticated device and easy to make to be effectively used in

teaching-learning situation. A few simple techniques are described here where students can make super-8 movies in order to facilitate studying difficult subjects like literature and drama.

The purpose of film-making is two-fold: 1) To create a live atmosphere in the classroom while studying literature or drama, and where students will be engaged in a highly motivating activity while learning. 2) To help overcome intellectual and learning barriers with the application of visual literacy (as in the case of film-making) instead of reading only. The use of simple super-8 movies in studying literature and drama is discussed here: 1) Students can make a complete movie of a Shakespearean drama or novel as a class project. The cooperative effort of the entire class where students will be the actors is a highly stimulating learning experience and will lead to a far better understanding of a complex subject than could have been possible through the passive reading/lecture methods. In this case, a film-making project by the entire class will induce students to an appreciation of Shakespeare's art by making them see themselves in the movie as the great characters of Shakespeare's plays, as well as an overall appreciation of the literature. 2) For writing exercises, students can write a script after reading a drama or one-act play and make a movie using animation techniques which is usually the process of filming stills or numbers of student-made drawings and/or "puppets" and put together to make a complete movie. The students' <u>own script</u> can be dubbed on the film with "sound strip" to make a sound movie to add a new dimension in learning.

Another creative method of generating students' thinking and writing

ability is to assign them to make a film related to current social events or problems, their home life, or about their town or school or a national event. Here, students will develop their own theme and write a narration or story to accompany the produced film. Again, students can prepare a simple study guide to accompany the film. These techniques of developing writing competency through film-making will permit learners of varying (and even of limited) abilities to experience meaningful stimuli which would otherwise be unavailable to them in the normal reading/lecture classroom situation.

There is no question that the use of visual medium as discussed here is a convenient and innovative method of upgrading the teaching of English in our schools which would provide students with creative learning experiences as well as pleasure and satisfaction for active participation in all phases of learning activities. It can also help teachers to overcome learning barriers by the use of visual materials as a living and dynamic textbook.